Remarks

1. Introduction

Claims 32-37, 66-71, and 77-84 are currently pending. Claims 32 and 80 are independent claims.

2. Rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

The Office Action rejected claim 35 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for the term "said receiver's name and endpoint" as lacking antecedent basis. Applicants amend claim 35 to overcome the rejection.

3. Rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 32-37 and 66-71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,742,763 (Jones). The Jones reference teaches a message delivery system whereby entities are represented by network presences associated with handle identifiers used as addresses. Col. 1, lines 6-10. Jones teaches that electronic mail addresses are difficult to remember. Col. 1, line 66 – col. 2, line 2. In order to overcome this problem, Jones teaches that handles may be used and states that "[e]ach handle provides a distinct cyberpresence identifier for an entity." col. 2, lines 61-62. The handle, such as "bigbear", "Jane_Farnsworth", "ATT", "usenet.rec.gardening", "empiricists", "president_XYZ", is used as a universal address. It acts to identify **both** the end user and the end device. Attributes are associated with a particular handle such as a telephone number or a fax number. For example, if "bigbear" is designated, attributes of "bigbear" are examined to determine the address of the endpoint. If the attributes indicate that the address is a telephone number, a call is made to the end user. Moreover, Jones teaches that each network presence must have a distinct handle. Col. 4, lines 45-51 ("An entity may have multiple network presences each of which is associated with a distinct handle. For example, an entity which is a person may have one network presence for activities related to their job, another network presence for activities related to their primary hobby, and yet another network presence for activities related to their other personal uses.")

This is in contrast to one aspect of the current invention, which claims a nickname-based routing system for routing electronic messages. Both the form of the electronic messages and the

handling of the electronic messages are considerably different from the teachings of the Jones references. Specifically, the electronic message as claimed recites two distinct portions: (1) a designation of the user; and (2) a nickname of the endpoint. Moreover, claim 32 recites that the electronic message is parsed so that both portions are determined. *See* claim 32 ("parsing the electronic message to determine a designation for a user"; "parsing the electronic message to determine a nickname of an endpoint designated in the electronic message, the nickname of the endpoint being distinct from the designation for the user"). In contrast, the Jones reference merely teaches a single handle, and does not teach both the user designation and the endpoint nickname. Therefore, applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action that the Jones reference teaches both limitations. Specifically, the Office Action cites col. 4, liens 25-64 and col. 4, lines 33 and 52-64 as respectively teaching (1) parsing the electronic message to determine the designation of the user; and (2) parsing the electronic message to determine the nickname of the endpoint. The sections cited in the Jones reference teach only that a single handle is parsed in order to determine a unique network address. There is no teaching, or even a suggestion, in Jones of a user designation and a nickname of an endpoint.

Moreover, the Jones reference teaches away from the present invention. Jones teaches that only a single handle is needed to route an electronic message. In contrast, the present invention as claimed requires at least two portions (a designation of the user and a nickname of the endpoint) to route a message. At first glance, one may believe that Jones is easier to route electronic messages than the present invention as claimed. Jones requires only a single unique address for routing whereas the present invention as claimed requires a user designation and a nickname. In fact, the converse is true. The structure and processing of the electronic messages as presently claimed allows for much easier and more robust sending of electronic messages. For example, the nickname of the endpoint may be as simple or standardized as homephone, cellphone, fax, etc. In addressing an electronic message, the sender may simply recall the designation of the user to receive the electronic message, and a standardized nickname (such as the homephone, cellphone, fax). This is in direct contrast to the Jones reference, which requires that every endpoint must have a unique address. In practice, Jones requires that the sender recall a unique handle if the person is at work and another unique address if the person is at a hobby. *See* col. 4, lines 45-51. This requirement of remembering a unique handle for each endpoint is burdensome, particularly when users typically may have multiple endpoints, such as a

homephone, workphone, fax, cellphone, e-mail, etc. Expecting a sender to remember the handles for each of the endpoints is unrealistic. Therefore, applicants believe that claim 32, and the claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct over the cited references.
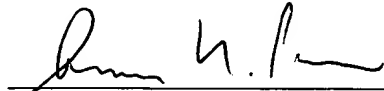
Applicants further introduce new claim 80 which comprises a nickname-based routing system. Claim 80 recites "an electronic message . . . with fields for a nickname of an endpoint and an address of the endpoint", "parsing the electronic message to determine a nickname of an endpoint designated in the electronic message and an address associated with the nickname", "accessing a database to determine a type of endpoint to route the electronic message to based on the nickname" and "formatting at least a portion of the electronic message based on the determined type of endpoint". An example of this is disclosed in the specification at page 12, lines 14-18 wherein the electronic message is parsed for a nickname (such as "Fax") and an address (such as "3126346580"). A database may be accessed to determine the type of endpoint to route the electronic message to, and to format the message for the determined type. Moreover, as claimed in claim 83, the nickname based routing system may route the message through the platform on behalf of a designated user. See page 12, lines 14-18, "Also, the invention will enable dynamic nicknames such as JohnDoe+Fax+3126346580@centerpost.com which will route an <u>outbound</u> message through the platform and out to the specific fax number on behalf of John Doe's account." (Emphasis in original). The features of a nickname for an endpoint, an address associated with the nickname in the electronic message, determining a type of endpoint based on the nickname, and formatting for the determined type are not taught or suggested in the Jones reference. Thus, applicants believe that the newly added claims are patentably distinct over the cited art.

4.   Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit pending claims 32-37, 66-71, and 77-84 are allowable in their present form, and hereby request allowance of the claims. If any questions arise or issues remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below in order to expedite disposition of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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